THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • FRIDAY • NOVEMBER 22, 2024 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 42 • LATE CITY EDITION

READ SHARE FOLLOW

newindianexpress.com

facebook.com/thenewindianxpress twitter.com/newindianxpress

instagram.com/newindianexpress

MASS FEDERAL JOB CUTS IN DOGE'S BLUEPRINT FOR MEGA U.S. REFORMS

Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy provided the blueprint for an unprecedented US government reform in an op-ed on the Wall Street Journal

CRACKDOWN COMING ON WORK FROM HOME

The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) will suggest job cuts after identifying the minimum number of employees required at each federal agency, Musk and Ramaswamy wrote. Federal employees will not have the option of work from home. "If federal employees don't want to show up, American taxpayers shouldn't pay them," they wrote

DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH EXECUTIVE ACTION

- DOGE, they wrote, will present a list of 'illicit' regulations to President Donald Trump, who can then pass executive orders to pause them
- The 2022 US Supreme Court ruling that restricted the Environment Protection Agency's power to regulate carbon emissions will be a reference in their crackdown on regulations, the two wrote | P12

$500 bn

HOW MUCH DOGE HOPES TO HELP THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SAVE EACH YEAR

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

WAR CRIMES

Int'l court issues arrest warrant against Israeli PM

AGENCIES @ The Hague

THE International Criminal Court on Thursday issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defence minister Yoav Gallant, and Hamas' military chief Mohammed Deif, accusing them of crimes against humanity in connection with their war that began more than a year ago.

The warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant focus on allegations Israel has used food as a weapon in its campaign against Hamas in Gaza, a charge Israeli officials deny.

The warrants were issued by a three-judge panel in a unanimous decision. The panel said there were reasonable grounds to believe they "intentionally and knowingly deprived the civilian population in Gaza of objects indispensable to their survival", including food, water, medicine, fuel and electricity.

The decision came six months after ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan requested the warrants.

Reacting sharply, Netanyahu said Israel "rejects with disgust the absurd and false actions". He said: "There is nothing more just than the war that Israel has been waging in Gaza."

The ICC is a court of last resort that only prosecutes cases when domestic law enforcement authorities cannot or will not investigate. Israel is not a member state of the court. Despite the warrants, none of the suspects is likely to face judges in The Hague anytime soon. Member countries are required to detain suspects facing a warrant if they set foot on their soil, but the court has no way to enforce that.

RUSSIAN RETALIATION

A video grab shows flashes over the Ukrainian city of Dnipro, which Kyiv claimed was attacked by a Russian intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). It was in apparent retaliation to Ukraine firing longer range missiles at Russia, sourced from the US and the UK. Russian President Vladimir Putin later said it was a combat test of a new mid-range ballistic missile in a non-nuclear hypersonic configuration. Named Oreshnik, it travels at a speed of Mach 10, or 2.5-3 km per second. Modern air defence systems are not equipped to intercept the Oreshnik, he bragged | AFP | P9

The defendants orchestrated an elaborate scheme to bribe Indian govt officials to secure contracts worth billions of dollars and lied about the bribery as they sought to raise capital from US - **US Attorney Breon Peace**

As stated by DoJ itself, "the charges in the indictment are allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty." All possible legal recourse will be sought - **Adani Group**

US court cloud over Adani

■ Bribery charges against Adani Group chairman, 7 others ■ $250 million kickbacks to Indian govt officials to sign power supply contracts ■ $200 mn paid in Andhra alone

KENYA CANCELS ADANI PROJECTS

Kenyan President William Ruto said that he has cancelled multimillion-dollar airport expansion and energy deals with Adani after US indictments. He said the decision was made 'based on new information'

RAHUL DEMANDS IMMEDIATE ARREST

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Thursday demanded immediate arrest of Gautam Adani. "Why is he roaming around like a free man?" he asked, demanding his arrest

CURIOUS TIMING, QUIPS BJP

The BJP said all the states mentioned in the US indictment were at that time ruled by opposition parties. It also questioned the timing, just before the start of Parliament session

ARSHAD KHAN & BSN MALLESWARA RAO @ New Delhi / Vijayawada

THE US Department of Justice (DoJ) has indicted Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani and seven others on bribery charges involving over $250 million in payments to Indian government officials to secure solar energy contracts. The US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York charged Adani and others with conspiracy to commit securities and wire fraud, as well as substantive securities fraud, for their involvement in a multi-billion dollar scheme to deceive US investors and global financial institutions with false and misleading statements.

The indictment alleges that between 2020 and 2024, the accused conspired to pay bribes to officials in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu & Kashmir to secure lucrative solar energy supply contracts. These contracts were expected to generate post-tax profits exceeding $2 billion over an estimated 20-year period.

The prosecutors said the Adanis raised more than $3 billion in loans and bonds by hiding their corruption from lenders and investors. Following the reports, Adani Green Energy cancelled plans to raise $600 million in US dollar-denominated bonds.

The other executives who are indicted are Vneet S Jaain (ex-CEO of Adani Green), Ranjit Gupta, Rupesh Agarwal, Saurabh Agarwal, and Deepak Malhotra.

An indictment is the formal charges prepared by prosecutors and returned by a grand jury to start criminal proceedings. It is not a conviction and the accused remains innocent until proven guilty in court.

Adani Group denied the allegations and called them baseless, adding that it will take all possible legal steps. "The Adani Group has always upheld and is steadfastly committed to maintaining the highest standards of governance, transparency and regulatory compliance across all jurisdictions of its operations," it said.

Adani shares crashed up to 23% on Thursday.

In another investigation, the US Securities and Exchange Commission said that hundreds of thousands of dollars were paid or promised to officials in Odisha to buy 500 MW power from the Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) to which Adani Green Energy was supplying power.

SEC also alleged that Adani paid $200 million to Andhra officials following his meeting with the then chief minister. Y S Jaganmohan Reddy's YSR Congress Party strongly condemned the allegations, saying they were false.

In his pushback, Tamil Nadu electricity minister V Senthil Balaji said the electricity corporation run by his government does not have any commercial ties with Adani's firm.

Karnataka govt backtracks on plan to revise BPL cards

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE state government has backtracked from revising Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) cards after facing a public and political backlash over a purported plan to cancel or revise BPL cards.

Food and Civil Supplies Minister **KH Muniyappa** said no cards were cancelled except those of taxpayers holding BPL cards and those who are in government service, which have been reviewed. "Other than these categories, if cards of eligible beneficiaries are cancelled, it will be rectified and rice and other grains will be given from next week," he said.

Muniyappa told reporters on Thursday that every card is eligible and there is no question of cancellation. "If people have issues of not getting rice, they need not have to apply for new cards. The existing cards can be continued and we will clear the minor glitches; and from next week onwards, they can avail rice and grains. Those who did not get rice and grains in September and October, will get an additional two months' rice from next month," he said.

Muniyappa pointed out that as per the 2011 census, over 66% of the state's population is under the card's ambit, while none of the other states, including Kerala and Tamil Nadu, have over 50%. "Karnataka has the highest taxpayers and we are second in the country to maintain good finances. When that is the case, 66% of the population seems to have issues. As per the guidelines, if BPL cardholders, when verified and found not eligible (taxpayers and government employees), are added to the APL card category," he said, adding that there are 98,473 cardholders who filed I-T returns and 4,036 cardholders, who are government employees. P6

EXPRESS READ

21 get life term for killing Dalit woman

Tumakuru: A local court on Thursday sentenced 21 people, including two women, to life imprisonment for murdering a Dalit woman 14 years ago. They murdered 'Dhaba' Honnamma, 45, at Gopalapura. P5

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE

INDULGE

42 PAGES, INCLUDING 24 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

READY FOR THUNDER DOWN UNDER

With the five-Test series between India and Australia getting underway in Perth on Friday, a look at some key talking points...

PACE VS PACE CAPTAINS FACE-OFF

In the absence of a full-time captain Rohit Sharma, vice-captain Jasprit Bumrah will step in to lead the side for the second time in his career. While India lost to England, but the times have changed since then. After a long time, two pacers- Bumrah and Pat Cummins, his Australian counterpart, would lead their sides.

CHANCE FOR YOUNGSTERS TO STEAL THE SHOW

In Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sarfaraz Khan, Devdutt Padikkal and Dhruv Jurel, India have batting stars who have not yet played the longest format in Australia. This is their opportunity to make an impact in the series. Jurel, who played in the A series, managed to impress many, but for others, this is the golden opportunity to prove their mettle

'BAGGAGELESS' INDIA SEEK QUICK TURNAROUND

India are going into the series after a 0-3 loss against New Zealand on home soil. Multiple players, including Kohli, Sharma, and Bumrah, could not make their mark in the series. "We are not carrying any baggage from the New Zealand series," said captain Bumrah ahead of the Perth Test. It is time to show that in Perth.

EYES ON WTC TABLE

In the five-match series, both teams' eye would also remain on the World Test Championship points table where currently five teams are fighting to make it to the final of the event. India need to win at least four matches in their last series of the cycle to make it to their third consecutive WTC final in England.

AI module for land registration soon

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE @ Bengaluru

UPBEAT about the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) enhancing efficiency in governance, Revenue Minister **Krishna Byre Gowda** on Thursday revealed that his department will soon be rolling out an AI module which will streamline land transactions and registration processes.

Byre Gowda, who interacted with government officials and leading tech company representatives at the Bengaluru Tech Summit 2024, shared the state government's vision for a tech-driven future, which puts the common man at the centre.

Sharing details about the revenue department's plans for AI deployment, he said, "With the advent of AI, the opportunities are multifold, to harness AI for governance. In my department, where I look at land administration and land record management, we are now, as a first step, using AI in our systems for the purpose of land registration." "In a month's time or so, we are going to roll out this AI module in our department, where people can just plug in basic details of a land transaction... If they want to rent a property, they can just key in the basic details and the system will generate a document for them, using AI," he added. This will include basic registration documents such as rental agreements, lease documents, and so on, diminishing the need to depend on intermediaries to have them. P4

₹26 crore assets detected in raid on four officials

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Lokayukta police raided 25 places of four state government officials on Thursday and found assets worth Rs 26.66 crore disproportionate to their known sources of income.

Among them, Krishnaveni MC, senior geologist, Mangaluru, against whom a case was registered by Chikkaballapura Lokayukta police, was allegedly found owning assets worth Rs 11.93 crore, including three sites valued at Rs 10.41 crore, one flat at Yelahanka in Bengaluru, one commercial complex under construction, 28 acres of coffee estate and movable assets of Rs 1.51 crore, including Rs 56,450 cash, ornaments worth Rs 66.71 lakh, vehicles valued at Rs 60 lakh and household articles valued at Rs 24.40 lakh.

Mahesh, MD of Kaveri Neeravari Nigama Niyamitha, Bengaluru, was allegedly found possessing assets worth Rs 6.89 crore. They included 25 sites, one house and 25 acres of agricultural land worth Rs 4.76 crore and movable assets of Rs 1.82 lakh in cash, ornaments worth Rs 15 lakh, vehicles valued at Rs 25 lakh and household articles worth Rs 1.71 crore. P5

India demands $600 billion in grants as climate finance from developed nations

S V KRISHNA CHAITANYA

EXPRESS IN BAKU

YEAR after year, COP after COP, we keep discussing what needs to be done without addressing how it is to be done," said Leela Nandan, deputy leader of the Indian delegation at COP29 and secretary of the Union environment ministry.

Talking at an open-ended 'Quruultay' summit convened by the COP29 presidency after it released a set of decision draft texts, including the one on New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), Nandan said the climate talks began with a clear focus on enablement through the NCQG.

"However, as we approach the conclusion, we see a troubling shift towards mitigation without the corresponding means of implementation. This is unacceptable. Mitigation ambitions are meaningless without the financial support to make them a reality."

The NCQG must reflect finance as the critical enabler for developing nations to formulate and implement their ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). This requires specificity—on structure, quantum, quality, timeframes, access, transparency and review. "We demand a mobilisation goal of $1.3 trillion, with at least $600 billion in grants or grant-equivalent resources. Proposals to expand the contributor base, introduce macroeconomic and fiscal conditionalities, or push for carbon pricing and private sector-driven investment flows are contrary to the NCQG mandate. This goal is about financial support, not an investment target," Nandan said.

Leela Nandan

India also said climate action in developing countries must remain country-driven, aligned with national priorities and circumstances, and rooted in sustainable development goals and poverty eradication.

On mitigation, India said it rejects the prescriptive approach in the draft. Introducing targets for 2030, 2035, and 2050 in a manner that shifts responsibility onto developing nations while ignoring the historical emissions of Annex I countries creates a crisis of climate leadership. Annex I parties must shoulder their obligations. Their emissions continue to rise, and they have yet to close the pre-2020 mitigation gap.

On just transition, the draft text unacceptably reinterprets the shared understanding. Transitioning must begin globally, with developed countries taking the lead in mitigation. Domestic transitions in developing nations cannot succeed when constrained by the inaction of developed countries, India said in its statement.

India said this is the Finance COP—the enabler COP. "If we fail to achieve a meaningful outcome, we fail in our fight against climate change. Developed countries have a clear responsibility to fulfill their commitments. Climate justice and the survival of millions depend on it," Nandan said.

LATEST NEGOTIATING TEXT REJECTED BY ALL

The latest negotiating draft text on the NCQG for climate finance has once again failed to specify a concrete funding target. This has frustrated developing nations, which had hoped for a firm commitment to address their escalating needs for climate adaptation, mitigation, and loss and damage. The NCQG, set to replace the $100 billion per year commitment under the Paris Agreement, is critical to scaling up financial support from developed to the developing nations post-2025. | P12